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REVIEWS.

Liberty in the Nineteenth Century. By FREDERIC MAY HOLLAND.
G. P. Putnam's Sons. Pp. viii + 257.

As AN index to certain literary aspects of the subjects referred to this little book may have a place. It is hardly more than a catalogue of events, with very summary judgments about their meaning. For instance, under the chapter heading "Fruits of Peace," "Owen and other philanthropists," viz., Bentham, James Mill, Wordsworth, Scott, Cobbett, and Landor, are disposed of in four pages, and in that brief space we get a clue to the author's estimate of the men who write books. He seems to have no doubt that books produce liberty more than liberty produces books. If he is right, he will at least have to go back of the nineteenth century to find the books that have produced nineteenth-century liberty. Again, sixty-three pages suffice to review nineteenth-century liberty in continental Europe and in Great Britain. The remainder of the book is devoted to the United States. "The founders of American literature" claim four pages, in which there is room for Sidney Smith's overquoted fling: "Who reads an American book?" Meanwhile two pages (64, 65) are all that are necessary to represent the concrete conditions constituting liberty down to 1860. From the sociologist's viewpoint the proper description of the book would be "a sketch of the things that theorists have spoken and written about liberty, chiefly in the United States, during the past century." Of the things that actually constitute liberty, of the condition of our people with reference to them, of the precise nature of the obstacles to be overcome in extending liberty, the book reveals hardly more than it does about American geology or geography or climatology. The book is of precisely the type which the opening sentences of the preface would lead a sociologist to expect, viz.: "This book is a result of having studied the development of political and religious liberty for forty years. How well I have *selected my authorities* the reader can judge. I will merely say that I have mentioned no writer whom I have not studied carefully." Liberty is thus an affair of writers. If the author had secluded himself during these forty years in the Boston Athenæum, he would have had all the contact with liberty

or the absence of it that was necessary for his task. What a nice, genteel, ladylike affair human liberty is, to be sure! The book belongs rather less than the letters of Howells' "Utopian" in the world of capitalistic combinations, and party bosses, and wars of union *vs.* non-union labor. It is a distinct addition to our conceptions of things that are not so.

A. W. S.

Le malaise de la démocratie. Par GASTON DESCHAMPS. Paris : Armand Colin et Cie., 1899. Pp. 359.

THE French literature of morbid national self-consciousness grows apace. It tends to convince disinterested onlookers that it is not as well with France as it should be, whether the writers affirm or deny exceptional evils in their society. Americans who are anxious to avoid premature and superficial judgments cannot repress suspicion that so much introspection and self-accusation is not a sign of superior national austerity, but of national uneasiness for which there must be peculiar reasons. The book before us is typical of a considerable class. It finds very little to praise in present French society. It begins with the creation, for modern French philosophers; "the beginning of the democratic régime." In successive chapters it describes, both historically and in their present form, the politician, Cæsarism and "mediocracy," pornography and scandals, the almoners of democracy, German pedagogy, the Anglo-Saxon mania, the unrest of the university, the unrest of the rising generation, the army, and the democracy.

We have had treatises on the psychology of crime, of democracy, of socialism, and there will soon be material enough for a psychology of current French self-defamation. Without this setting it will be impossible to appraise writers of this class at their proper valuation; but, on the other hand, an estimate of the personal equation in each of these cases is necessary in order to construct such a general view. Just now we are at the mercy of miscellaneous impressionists. Whether the anonymous newspaper essayists, or the popular feuilletonistes, or Zola, or Anatole France, or sociologists like Demolin, or editorial writers in book form like the present author, their evidence is scrappy, incoherent, without perspective. Even foreigners who have had but casual opportunities for first-hand observation detect the partial and partisan character of these exhibits, but no way appears to make the one fragmentary report complement the others. The general effect, however,